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CLIPPINGS

A Weekly Column from Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

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For Immediate Release

Early Learning Starts with Routines

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When the kids get up on time and get ready for school without major hassles, it's a better day for everyone.

By creating morning and bedtime routines, parents can harness the enthusiasm and tackle any concerns their children may have about going to school and can prepare them for a positive educational experience.

Routines bring structure or sameness to a child's life, making for a smoother family environment. To set a routine, establish daily activities in an order and follow them. Doing things in a predictable order each day helps children feel secure at home and adapt more readily to school. Routines help children know their needs are being met now and will continue to be met in the future.

Routines should include going to bed at a certain time and getting up at a certain time. Helping children learn to set an alarm clock at night and shut it off in the morning provides more independence and makes getting up easier.

Allow time for a nutritious breakfast to help children focus on learning, and schedule the evening meal at the same time each evening. You can share new ideas and experiences while eating meals together to help your child learn how to talk about new things that are happening at school.

Some additional routines include laying clothes out for the next day before going to bed to save time in the morning, brushing teeth to develop healthy habits and reading a story to younger children to create a bedtime ritual.

Less stress at home can lead to more learning at school for your child and a better day for you as a parent. Routines benefit everyone, because we are all creatures of habit.

- 30 -

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